

W5YI

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

Fred Maia, W5YI, Editor, P.O. Box 565101, Dallas, TX 75356-5101
Tel. 817-461-6443 Electronic mail: 351-1297@mcimail.com

Vol. 17, Issue #14

\$1.50

PUBLISHED TWICE A MONTH

July 15, 1995

★ In This Issue ★

Vanity Call Signs Reduced to \$30.00
FCC to Act Faster on Rulemaking
New Zealand and the Morse Code
STS-71 Mission is a Success!
Voice of America to be Downsized!
FCC's 1996 Budget Cut 20 Percent
Info-Hwy: Environmental Menace
Postal Service Raises Foreign Rates
New Launch Date for Phase 3-D
Packard-Bell & Used Parts Saga
FCC Abolishes Bidding Preferences
Windows-95 Questions & Answers
Sex, Violence & Telecommunications
ARRL President Wilson Resigns
...and much much more!

FCC Adopts \$30.00 Fee for Vanity Call Signs

On June 14th, the FCC adopted a Schedule of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year (FY) 1995. Section 9 of the Communications Act requires the Federal Communications Commission to assess and collect annual regulatory fees in order to recover the costs specified by Congress for its enforcement, policy and rule making, international activities, and user information services.

The basic concept of regulatory fees is to charge those who benefit from FCC services rather than all taxpayers. The authority to impose and collect regulatory fees is contained in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 - the so-called Clinton Deficit Reduction Plan.

The amount to be collected in Fiscal Year-1995 is nearly double the \$60.4 million the FCC was required to recover in FY-94. As a result, fees for many services are significantly higher than in FY-1994 - but NOT those of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

The FCC tried to ease the burden of the new fee requirements by revising its system for assessing fees to better assure that the fee payments are reasonably related to the benefits derived from the Commission's regulation. The so-called user fees for the private wireless radio services were actually reduced. The collection of regulatory fees for fiscal year 1995 will begin on September 18th after a 90 day Congressional notification period.

Of particular interest to personal radio users is a reduction in the Annual Regulatory Fee from

\$7.00 to \$3.00 for Marine ship/coast, Aircraft/Aviation Ground, General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) stations and licensees ...and "Vanity" Station Call Signs selected by amateur operators. This means that amateur station call signs chosen by the licensee will now cost \$30.00 for 10 years instead of the previous \$70.00.

It is a long story (which we detailed in our August 15, 1993, W5YI Report) as to how specific amateur call signs chosen by the licensee got included in the Clinton budget. Basically it was the incredibly persistent work of a single amateur, Jim Wills, N5HCT of Tyler, Texas, who wanted his previous WA4EHQ call sign re-issued to him.

Wills filed a Petition for Rule Making in June 1990 requesting that amateurs be allowed to specify three call sign choices in order of preference in exchange for paying a \$30.00 fee to the FCC. He said "The Federal Budget and the amateur community all gain from this proposal."

That petition was denied because of the statutory exemption of amateur service applications from fees. But it started the ball rolling. Wills later contacted his Congressman (Ralph Hall, D-TX) - and with the help of Telecommunications Subcommittee Chairman Edward J. Markey who wrote FCC Chairman Al Sikes, got the "Vanity" call sign proposal included in the Clinton Deficit Reduction Plan. It was an unbelievable accomplishment to pull off! The initial annual fee

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #2
July 15, 1995

proposed in the Clinton budget for Vanity call signs was \$7.00. The American Radio Relay League later requested that this fee be increased to \$150.00 and changed to a one time application fee. So far, Congress has not acted on this proposal.

Commercial radio operator regulatory fees

Strangely, regulatory fees associated with the FCC's commercial radio operator program have now been eliminated entirely. As near as we can determine, Annual Regulatory Fees should never have been charged for these operator licenses in the first place. Although we have called the FCC in Washington, DC and Gettysburg, PA several times, no one seems to know why the regulatory fees are being discontinued.

The FCC's FY-1994 Private Radio Service Fee Filing Guide indicates that a \$7.00 annual fee (or \$35 for a five year term license) should be charged for the Marine Radio Operator Permit, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Class Radiotelegraph Certificate ...and the two GMDSS (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System) Operator and Maintainer license. (GMDSS is a the international automated satellite-based ship-to-shore alerting service that is in the process of replacing Morse code at sea.)

Neither the FY-1995 Schedule of Regulatory Fees nor the 90-page Report and Order mention the Commercial Radio Operator program at all! FCC officials told us on the telephone, however, to immediately discontinue collection of these regulatory fees. Any regulatory fees collected for these commercial radio operator licenses are being returned to the applicants. We also understand that there will probably be some sort of program whereby licensees who have paid a regulatory fee may file a written request a refund. The only fees that commercial radio operator licensees will pay now are examination fees and, if no examination is administered, (Section 8) application fees. Confusing? You bet it is!

Fiscal Year 1995 Regulatory Fees

In total, the Commission will be collecting Regulatory Fees totalling \$116.4 million in FY-1995 (which actually began on October 1, 1994.) The total amount to be collected is determined annually by Congress. Only \$8.5 million of the fees is scheduled to be recovered from Private Radio. (By contrast, cable TV operators will be assessed 49¢ for each of 60 million subscribers - or \$29.9 million. Mass media will pay \$21 million and common carriers: \$57 million.)

In the case of the Private Radio Services, the FCC assessed two levels of regulatory fees. The amounts were based on "exclusive use" and "shared use" frequencies. Licensees assigned exclusive or lightly shared frequencies are charged a higher \$6.00 annual fee

since theoretically they obtain higher quality communications.

Licensees who operate on heavily shared frequencies such as the shipboard radio services will pay a lower \$3.00 annual regulatory fee. For example: radio installations are required by domestic and international law for large passenger or cargo vessels.

Radio equipment may be voluntarily installed on smaller vessels, such as recreational boats. Another reason for the lower cost is that the FCC wanted to encourage boaters to carry radio equipment aboard their vessels for safety purposes and feared that the higher fee would discourage marine radio licensing. The FCC said that it anticipated a \$5.1 million FY-1995 revenue requirement to license 170,000 Marine (ship) stations for a ten year period - or \$30.00.

The same thinking went into aircraft, GMRS and Amateur Vanity Call Signs. Here is what the FCC had to say about vanity call signs. (Quoted from the 92-page Report and Order, MD Docket No. 95.3 covering Regulatory Fees)

Amateur Vanity Call Signs

"Fees for Amateur Vanity Call Signs are set forth in the FY-1995 Regulatory Fee Schedule within the Wireless Radio service category. The fee covers voluntary requests for specific call signs in the Amateur Radio Service.

"We have concluded our rule making proceeding related to the authorization of vanity call signs. See Report and Order in PR Docket No. 93-305, 10 FCC Rcd 1039 (1995). Therefore, amateur radio operators are required to submit a regulatory fee payment with their vanity call sign application in FY-1995.

"The revenue requirement for vanity call signs is \$840,000. We have revised our estimated payment units to 28,000 vanity call sign applications, as a result of further analysis by the Wireless Telecommunication Bureau. Dividing the service's revenue requirement by its estimated payment units and license term of ten years results in a fee of \$3 per year per license as proposed in the Notice.

"Thus holders of amateur vanity call signs are subject to a \$3 annual regulatory fee per call sign, payable for an entire ten year license term at the time of application for a vanity call sign. The total regulatory fee is \$30 per license for the ten year term.

"Section 9(h) exempts amateur radio operator licenses under Part 97 of the Commission's Rules from the requirement to pay an annual regulatory fee. However, Section 9(g)'s Regulatory Fee Schedule explicitly includes Amateur Vanity Call Signs as a category subject to the payment of a regulatory fee." (End Quote.)

It thus appears that the FCC expects to issue

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #3
July 15, 1995

about 2,300 "Vanity" call signs a month or about 550 a week. Based on the widespread "fever-pitch" interest (and number of FCC Form 610-V's application forms that have been requested) our initial reaction to this estimate is that it is low. Drastically low!

According to the new rules printed in the Report and Order, applicants for Amateur Vanity Call Signs must submit their FCC Form 610-V applications to the Commission's lockbox bank (the Mellon Bank in Pittsburgh) at the following address:

FCC, Amateur Vanity
P. O. Box 358924
Pittsburgh, PA 15251-5924

The FCC Form 610-V, however, has not yet been released by the Commission. Its distribution is being held up pending resolution of several Petitions for Reconsideration of the Amateur Vanity Call Sign rules. We have a standing order, however, with the Commission for the FCC Form 610-V applications once they are available. Anyone that wants a free copy should send us a large (No. 10 business-size) self-addressed stamped envelope and we will see to it that you get one. (See page 1 for our address.)

Applying for a Vanity Call Sign

Keep in mind that the amateurs will be applying for special call signs according to a phased-in program developed by the ARRL and accepted by the Commission. You will not be able to apply for a special call sign until the FCC's Gettysburg, PA computer is ready to handle the program.

Even then, only FCC Form 610-V applications for previously held call signs or the call sign of a close, deceased relative will be accepted in Phase One. The second "gate" then opens to Extra Class licensees, the third gate to the Advanced Class. Lastly, gate four would open the system to any licensee. The timing of when to submit your application will be announced by Public Notice.

Furthermore, you may only select a call sign appropriate for your license class (or lower) and only call signs available to the sequential call sign system are available. For example: AA1AAA and NA1AAA are authorized U.S. amateur call signs according to the FCC (Part §2.302) rules. But the 1978 Sequential Call Sign System does not provide for the issuance of AA-AL or NA-NZ by 3 letter amateur call signs. There are many instances where seemingly obtainable call signs are not available to the Sequential Call Sign System.

Payment for a Vanity call sign must be submitted with the application and "...shall include an advance payment of the total annual regulatory fee payment due for the entire term of the license...." In other words,

\$3.00 times 10 years equals the \$30.00 payment. Applications without the fee will be returned.

"Any regulatory fee payment must be submitted in the form of a check, bank draft or money order denominated in U.S. dollars and drawn on a United States financial institution and made payable to the Federal Communications Commission or by Visa or Mastercard credit cards only. ...Any regulatory fee payment made by credit card or money order must be submitted with a completed FCC Form 159." (Remittance Advice)

And there is no guarantee that Amateur Vanity Call Signs will remain at the \$30.00 level for a ten year term. The rules provide that the fees can (and most assuredly will be) adjusted annually if the actual cost of the services provided increases or decreases over the initial projection.

FCC TO ACTIVATE FASTER DECISION MAKING

One of the complaints about FCC decision making is that it takes too long once the preliminary work has been forwarded to the Commission by one of their Bureaus or Offices. The FCC Commissioners have now agreed to speed up the process.

New guidelines will be implemented for agenda items beginning with the September 1995 agenda, and for circulation items beginning on July 1, 1995. A circulation item gets voted in a Commissioners' Office rather than at a public meeting. The effectiveness of the new policy will be reviewed after six months.

The new guidelines reflect input from all of the Commissioners, as well as the Chiefs of the Commission's Bureaus and Offices. The new guidelines include the following:

Agenda Meeting Items:

- Earlier delivery of agenda items to Commissioner's offices, and increased communication between Commissioners' officers and Commission staff in advance of delivering items.
- An editing schedule designed to enable quicker release of items, and to ensure that Commissioners' views are fully reflected in items when adopted.
- Goal of releasing agenda items routinely within two business days of agenda meetings, and not later than seven calendar days after meetings, whenever possible.

Circulation Items:

- Goal of acting on circulation items within 30 days after delivery to the Commissioners
- Procedures to expedite adoption of items once they have been approved by three Commissioners
- Goal of releasing circulation items routinely within two business days, and not later than seven calendar days after adoption, whenever possible.

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #4

July 15, 1995

THE NEW ZEALAND POSITION ON MORSE CODE

In our April 15th issue we reported that the Government of New Zealand would be working towards abolishing the international requirement that amateur HF operators have Morse code knowledge. It was a startling decision ...especially in view of the opposing position taken by New Zealand's national amateur radio society, New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters, Inc.

To make matters even more interesting, NZART's Fred Johnson, ZL2AMJ headed up the 3-person IARU CW Ad Hoc Committee that was charged with making a recommendation to the International Amateur Radio Union relative to changes in the ITU Radio Regulations. ARRL's Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, and John Allaway, G3FKM were the other two members.

That committee concluded that Morse code was an international language among radio amateurs and that the requirement for ham band operation below 30 MHz should continue. The IARU later adopted a resolution supporting these findings at their September 1994 meeting in Singapore and it has more or less become the international position for amateur radio.

The next World Radio Conference that could consider a change to the international regulations takes place later this year (October 23) in Geneva. The first agenda item of WRC-95 is to review the VGE report and to consider related proposals. The Voluntary Group of Experts are advisors who have been chosen by their governments to make recommendations aimed at improved spectrum use and streamlining the international radio regulations.

The VGE report is already completed and it will recommend that there be no change to Article 32. RR2735 is the Article 32 section that requires manual Morse knowledge when amateurs communicate below 30 MHz. New Zealand, however, will offer their proposal to delete RR2735 on the premise that the manual telegraphy requirement for the International Service is recommended by the VGE to be suppressed.

The June 1995 issue of "Morsum Magnificat, The Morse Magazine" (edited by Geoff Arnold, G3GSR and published out in Dorset, England) carries a 6-page feature story entitled "New Zealand Seeks to Abolish Morse Test Rule." It was authored by Gary E. J. Bold, ZL1AN, who also writes "The Morseman" column for NZART's official journal, "Break In." As one might guess, "Morsum Magnificat" is very pro-CW since their subscribers are all Morse enthusiasts. Here is ZL1AN's own version of what happened in New Zealand.

(1.) While it may appear that the Minister of Communications decision is due to the submissions of ORACLE, "I believe that this changed stance more accurately

reflects a fundamental change in thinking at the highest level of MOC, which happens to coincide with ORACLE's philosophy. (ORACLE is the grass roots Organization Requesting Alternatives by Code-Less Examinations, Inc. This break-away group is managed by previous high-level NZART members who were unable to gain support for a change in the amateur telegraphy regulations.)

(2.) "Bob Vernall, ZL2CA, announced the formation of ORACLE in a message uploaded to the New Zealand packet network on 9 March 1994."

(3.) During ZL2CA's term on the NZART Council in 1992 a resolution was passed that "...there should be alternative ways to qualify for General Grade, and a choice should be offered from a selection of alternative skills or technical knowledge standards; in place of the present obligatory no-alternative Morse code test."

(4.) A senior Ministry of Communications official wrote back that he was confused by "...this sudden change in direction by the Council..." a concept that was previously rejected by NZART membership. The MOC suggested "...a co-ordinated regional approach, such as an initiative from the Region 3 International Amateur Radio Union executive, or better still from the IARU membership as a whole, to amend the provisions of No. 2735 at an appropriate opportunity, may clear a way for such a goal to be achieved."

(5.) ZL1AN said the NZART Council's letter had been written at the primary insistence of ZL2CA and "The majority of Council, who did NOT support its proposal, agreed to its submission simply because they were confident that the MOC's response would be exactly along the lines as it turned out to be."

(6.) A later survey among NZART members made it "...abundantly clear that members did not support Council's move in approaching the MOC for a non-Morse license."

(7.) ZL2CA sought re-election as a Councillor in 1993 on a platform that included "...having real-world qualifying requirements. A choice of suitable subjects, with Morse proficiency as an option..." He was not re-elected.

(8.) NZART's president notified the MOC of the no-change IARU position and suggested that the New Zealand position should be (1) to not actively seek a change to RR2735 at this time, (2) to support no change and (3) to review this position later when technical developments or increased HF spectrum warrant reconsideration.

(9.) The MOC's response was that "...I am of the view that it would be unwise to adopt the three very precise positions which you postulate. I am advised, and believe, that the amateur service world-wide is a

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #5

July 15, 1995

progressive body of enthusiasts, who look to the future for self-training, intercommunication and technical investigation. To adopt such a rigid stance on the matter of the value, or indeed, in the opinion of some, the low value of Morse code as a means of intercommunication is, in my opinion, contrary to the progressive nature of the hobby." The MOC did say, however, that would not seek a change until there was support for a change.

(10.) In March 1995, the MOC issued the following policy statement. "At the present time RR2735 effectively requires all administrations to verify a competence in Morse code before the issue of an amateur license to operate in the frequency bands below 30 MHz. The Ministry has now considered this provision quite carefully and has concluded that it is no longer appropriate as a Treaty obligation for Government."

The statement went on to say that the following regulation, RR2736 contains "...ample scope ...to require competency in Morse code or not as deemed appropriate. RR2735 adds a specific obligation in regard to Morse Code and in so doing limits national freedom but without providing any greater benefits. The Ministry has therefore formed a view that it is appropriate to propose the deletion of RR2735 at the forthcoming WRC-95 and will now work to this end."

RR2736 provides that "Administrations shall take such measures as they judge necessary to verify the operational and technical qualifications of any person wishing to operate the apparatus of an amateur station."

The MOC added that "...there is no intention to change our present licensing policies or Morse code requirements" but the "...international regulations will thus be flexible to enable administrations to respond to the needs of their national circumstances."

(11.) ZL1AN said "This represents a substantial, and abrupt, change in MOC policy. Specifically, the Minister had said in September 1994 that 'New Zealand will not make proposals for change ...until there is evidence of significant opinion ...to support modification of Article 32,' but MOC policy, as of March 1995, now does support such a change. Either, therefore, 'evidence of significant opinion' has now been found, or a fundamental shift in MOC thinking has taken place."

"The latter supposition is the only one possible. For, from the above summary, it is clear that this 'significant opinion does not come from NZART or its members."

(12.) ZL1AN called ORACLE a "Secret Society" with possibly less than 100 members. "Until an authenticated members count is available, and evidence is produced that more members do, indeed, support its

stance than the documented support of NZART members, its representations can have no validity in any democratic decision making process."

(13.) "The MOC is not ignorant of these facts. It is therefore unlikely that MOC would consider ORACLE's representations as the 'evidence of significant opinion' required by the Minister's letter - and the MOC would be most unwise to so consider it."

ZL1AN concludes that "...the changed MOC stance is a direct result of changed high-level thinking by the MOC, which happens to coincide with ORACLE's position.

RESPONSE FROM ORACLE

We sent excerpts from ZL1AN's article in Morsum Magnificat down to ZL2CA in Wellington, New Zealand via the Internet. Here is his reply:

"...I find that the conclusion by Gary Bold is extraordinary. How does he reconcile that ORACLE did not influence the policy when we made a series of lobbying inputs on the very topic of leading towards regulatory change to Morse code testing? If ORACLE did not influence the government decision, then who did, as it was not the NZART lobby? Gary Bold can choose to ignore ORACLE but he can not ignore the government decision.

"Gary Bold is presenting a position from an 'anti ORACLE' point of view. He does not know the true membership position, and his speculative estimate of less than 100 members is incorrect. The Privacy Act in New Zealand protects the personal information of members, and in any case ORACLE wishes to have the image of placing quality policy discussion before amateurs and politicians rather than debating support bases.

"ORACLE claims to have good coverage of policies in New Zealand, even if there is no acknowledgement from the amateur radio society. The announcement of new policy was made following a series of joint meetings between the Ministry, ORACLE and NZART. To claim that ORACLE did not influence the new policy is inconsistent with the lobbying events and joint meetings on Morse code policy. ORACLE won the debate in New Zealand fair and square.

"ORACLE has received many hundreds of enquiries and indications of support from individuals in New Zealand and from many other countries. Coverage by CQ Magazine has resulted in responses being obtained internationally. A great many enquiries have been answered via the Internet. The e-mail address for ORACLE is:

walker_d@kosmos.wcc.govt.nz
...and Dave Walker ZL2BHE will be pleased to respond to further enquiries."

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #6
July 1, 1995

- STS-71 SAREX Mission - The Space Shuttle Atlantis began its historic flight to the Russian Space Station Mir on Tuesday, June 27 with an on-time launch from the Kennedy Space Center. Despite the threat of weather delays, the STS-71 mission and its U.S. and Russian crew of seven were lofted into the cloudy Florida skies at 19:32 UTC (2:32 p.m. central) ...the 100th U.S. human space flight. The mission began a new era of international co-operation in space by docking with the Russian Mir Space Station.

STS-71 carried the Shuttle Amateur Radio EXperiment. SAREX is a joint ARRL, NASA and AMSAT educational activity featuring amateur radio. The seven member astronaut crew included two ham radio operators: Pilot Charlie Precourt, KB5YSQ, and Mission Specialist Ellen Baker, KB5SIX.

Ellen previously used ham radio from aboard the Shuttle Columbia during STS-50 in June 1992. Charlie also operated SAREX from Columbia during STS-55 in April 1993.

The other five shuttle crew members included Commander Hoot Gibson, Mission Specialists Greg Harbaugh and Bonnie Dunbar and Russian Cosmonauts Anatoly Solovyev and Nikolai Budarin.

The primary goal of the Shuttle Mission was to rendezvous and dock with Mir, the first of at least seven shuttle flights to the Russian space station. The effort is a precursor to building the International Space Station. After the shuttle performed several, large thruster burns to catch up with the space station, Atlantis docked with Mir, at 13:20 UTC on Thursday June 29.

At the end of joint docked activities, the two Russian cosmonauts launched aboard Atlantis assumed responsibility for operation of the Mir station. The Mir-18 crew, who had been aboard Mir since March 16th, joined the STS-71 crew for the return trip to Earth.

One of the Mir-18 crew members, American astronaut Norm Thagard, returned home with the American record for a single space flight after nearly four months in space. The previous record was held by the Skylab-4 crew with 84 days in 1973-1974.

The Shuttle crew were kept quite

busy during the rendezvous phase of the mission and could not operate amateur radio during this flight phase. SAREX operations during the docked portion of the mission were also curtailed due to the SAREX antenna being blocked by Mir. SAREX operations were initiated, however, after the post separation burn was performed on July 4 at 13:39 UTC.

The crew conducted scheduled voice contacts via amateur radio with four school groups in the U.S. and one in Russia. The crew used the 2-meter VHF-FM voice radio which had facilitated the rendezvous and docking with Mir. A different set of frequencies were used for this SAREX mission. The downlink was 145.84 MHz, uplinks at 144.45 and 144.47 MHz.

The Space Shuttle Atlantis landed in Florida on July 7, at 1454 UTC. Early post-flight reports indicate that Mission Specialist Ellen S. Baker, KB5SIX and Pilot Charlie Precourt, KB5YSQ not only made successful contacts with the student groups but also conducted numerous random voice contacts with the amateur radio community to test the operational configuration of the Shuttle/Mir VHF radio hardware and antenna. The radio will be used to facilitate at least six more planned Mir docking missions.

SAREX reports and QSLs may be sent to ARRL EAD, STS-71 QSL, 225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111-1494, USA. Include the following information in your QSL or report: STS-71, date, time in UTC, frequency and mode (FM voice). In addition, you must also include a SASE using a large, business-sized envelope if you wish to receive a card. The Sacred Hearts Academy Radio Club in Honolulu, Hawaii has generously volunteered to manage the cards for this mission.

The next mission supporting SAREX activity is STS-70 ...currently scheduled for launch on July 13. (Report courtesy ARRL's Bob Inderbitzen, NQ1R)

- The Voice of America isn't too excited about the Republican's balanced budget plan. The VOA will have to curtail their international broadcasting activity since the House Appropriations Committee slashed the U.S. Information Agency's budget by 23%.

- Meanwhile, in an effort to cut costs, the FCC is also quietly slashing staff. One third of its field offices will be closing. The agency will be able to cut its monitoring budget from \$7.5 million to \$1. million a year.

The House Appropriations Committee has agreed to fund the FCC's 1996 Fiscal Year at the current level of \$186 million. (FY-96 begins Oct. 1, 1995.) It could result in eliminating up to 100 jobs. Current FCC staffing stands at 2,271 persons.

The FCC had asked for \$223.6 million which included \$25 million to relocate the agency's headquarters to a new building. FCC Chairman Reed Hundt also wanted to upgrade the FCC's computer system and offer some employees early retirement.

- A federal appeals court has agreed that the FCC can ban indecent broadcast radio or TV programming when it is likely that children may be watching. The U.S. Court of Appeals, Washington, DC ruled that the FCC may prohibit indecent broadcasts between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. They further said that Congress could broaden the ban from 6 a.m. to midnight.

The ban does not affect subscriber ordered wireline (cable) programming - only broadcast audiences which have no choice but to "subscribe." The court said viewers could tape late night broadcast programming and view it when they wanted to. The National Association of Broadcasters is considering an appeal to a higher court.

The FCC defined broadcast indecency as any "...language or material that, in context, depicts or describes, in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium, sexual or excretory activities or organs."

- Futurist magazine says the **Information Superhighway is an Environmental Menace** which could lead to the **Death of Rural America**. V.P. Al Gore says building the Info-highway will facilitate telecommuting and reduce automobile use and pollution. On the flip side, the report forecasts that city slickers will flock to rural America. "People will live in small towns if they can find jobs there." What happens if New York City moves to Vermont?

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #7

July 15, 1995

- Be aware that the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors approved an **international postage rate increase** effective as of July 9, 1995. The old and new rates are as follows:

	Canada Old	Canada New	Mexico Old	Mexico New	All Others Old	All Others New
Postcards	30¢	40¢	30¢	35¢	45¢	50¢
½-oz. Letter	35¢	40¢	40¢	46¢	55¢	60¢
1-oz. Letter	40¢	46¢	45¢	52¢	95¢	\$1.

- The Phase 3-D amateur radio satellite launch schedule has been changed. Reports in the space press and confirmed by European Space Agency officials, state that the launch of Ariane 502, the mission on which Phase 3D is manifested, is now set for May 29, 1996 rather than April 3rd as it had been previously. This follows a reschedule of the first launch in the Ariane 5 series, Ariane 501, from November of this year to mid-January 1996.

In another development, Ron Broadbent, G3AAJ, AMSAT-UK secretary has announced the formation of a program whereby individuals making a donation of £160 (\$250 U.S.) or more to the AMSAT-UK Phase 3-D Fund will have their personal names and/or call signs placed in the spacecraft prior to its launch. (Visa Mastercard accepted.)

Plans call for a small aluminum plate to be photo-etched with the names and calls of donors. The plate will then be placed into the spacecraft prior to launch. The plate will be photographed and a copy of the photo, together with a small engraved certificate or plaque, will be sent to the individual donor as a permanent memento of their support of the Phase 3-D project.

Those wishing to place their names in the Phase 3-D satellite, or those desiring more information should contact: **Ron Broadbent G3AAJ, 94 Herongate Road, Winstead Park, London, E12 5EQ, England.** Internet address: r.broadbent@ee.surrey.ac.uk

- Packard-Bell's 1994 sales more than doubled to \$3 billion - something that previous market leader, Compaq is very much aware of. Packard Bell does no national sales promotion of its own, instead it pours its \$180 million advertising budget into retail co-op ads. That assures that every electronics store ad will feature Packard-Bell. Its name has nothing to do with Hewlett-

Packard, Packard cars, or Bell telephone ...instead it is a resurrected name of a once leading TV brand. By keeping overhead low, Packard-Bell can offer more features than competitors. Or so it says.

It does not sell direct to consumers, instead its distributors include Walmart Stores and Sears, Roebuck and Co. Packard Bell now offers its PCs with colorful decorator desktop cases.

But there may be more to Packard Bell's success than just careful management. A story in the July 10th Business Week tells about a lawsuit recently filed by Compaq against Packard Bell. It seems that after Packard Bell outshipped Compaq for three straight quarters, Compaq charged that Packard Bell wasn't telling consumers that some of its computers were made with used parts. Compaq then urged state attorneys general to "consider an investigation." The objective was to force Packard Bell to bring its manufacturing practices in line with Compaq's.

Packard Bell now admits that it "recertifies good components from computers returned by customers and uses them to build new computers." The firm now includes fine print to the effect that its PCs may contain "serviceable used" parts. Compaq is considering using the admission in its advertising.

In any event, Japan's NEC Corp has just agreed to purchase 20 percent of privately-held Packard-Bell Electronics, Inc., for \$170 million. The purchase will provide operating cash for Packard Bell. The two companies will now pool their purchasing and form a large buying group. NEC controls more than half of Japan's PC market which is generally not IBM-compatible.

- If you don't already have an "800" toll-free number, you can forget about getting one! Ninety percent of the nation's 7.7 million available "800" numbers have been assigned. About 30,000 are allocated weekly.

Toll-free numbers were introduced by AT&T in 1967 and became universally available in 1984 with the breakup of the Bell System. Starting in August, "888" toll free numbers will be issued.

Toll-free numbers are allocated by Database Service Management, Inc., (they operate the national "800" data-

base) to 138 companies that are authorized to assign "800" numbers. The new "888" numbers probably will not be received well by business, since they lack the toll-free recognition of the 800 variety.

- Ever wonder what radio service is allocated which band of frequencies? The Second Edition of **Spectrum Guide: Radio Frequency Allocations in the United States, 30 MHz-300 GHz**, by Bennett Z. Kobb, KC5CW is now available.

A reference to the 331 VHF through EHF bands, this edition features the latest services under FCC consideration: the General Wireless Communications Service, Licensed Millimeter Wave Service, Local Multi-point Distribution Service, Low Power Radio Service, Local Area Determination Service, Family Radio Service, Shared Unlicensed Personal Radio Network (SUPERNet), National Information Infrastructure (NII) Band ...and others.

Cellular, PCS, radar, satellites, wireless data and other new and conventional radio services also are described in respective allocations, along with coverage of auctions, reallocations and spectrum rearming.

The book includes band and subject indexes and the relevant U.S., Government, Non-Government and International Footnotes that condition the ability of services to operate in each band.

Spectrum Guide is \$34.95 + \$3.00 s/h (\$5.00 for Priority Mail) and is available from PSI, (Tel. 800-460-0090,) 8870 Business Park Drive, Austin, Texas 78759. Bennett Kobb KC5CW, New Signals Press - Internet address: bkobb@newsigals.com

- Due to a Supreme court decision, no longer will bidders receive preferential treatment based on race or gender when applying for FCC licenses. Certain spectrum auctions carried 25 percent bidding preferences or "credits" for small businesses owned by women or minorities.

The next FCC auction, the so-called 'entrepreneur's block' of PCS (Personal Communication Service) licenses will take place on August 29th and is limited to small business.

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #8

July 15, 1995

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT WINDOW-95

To give you an idea of just how many Windows-95 software packages will be sold, Merisel, a major wholesale computer product distributor is preparing to receive 392 truckloads of this one item next month!

And with it comes truckloads of profits for Bill Gates. Forbes calls Microsoft CEO William H. Gates III the world's richest man. His personal fortune is valued at \$12.9 billion. Last year his net worth grew at the rate \$13 million a day. Not bad for a college drop-out. But it may be only the beginning.

What is Windows-95

Formerly code-named "Chicago," Windows-95 is the official name of the next major version of Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups 3.11. Destined to become the new standard in PC operating systems, Win-95 is an easier to use, faster and more powerful 32-bit desktop and portable PC platform. It maintains compatibility with existing Windows and MD-DOS operating-system applications and peripherals.

Win-95 contains 15 million lines of code. The objective is mind boggling ...to get 85 million PC users and a \$130 billion industry to move to Win-95. By fall, every PC sold will come with Windows-95 pre-installed.

Windows-95 includes built-in networking and messaging. It is called Windows-95 to give meaning to the version numbering scheme. It does not mean that Microsoft will release a new version every year.

IBM has their OS/2 Warp operating system which they believe is technically superior. It will not be compatible with Win-95 - something that IBM says they are not concerned about. A very big gamble, indeed!

What are the hardware requirements for Windows-95?

Win-95 will run on Intel 80386DX or higher processors with a minimum of 4 MB of memory (8 MB recommended.) A VGA video adapter is required. Win-95 uses about 15 MB more disk space than Windows 3.1 or Windows for Workgroups 3.11 ...in total, between 25 and 50 MB!

The hardware industry is anticipating boom times ahead as users upgrade to faster, more powerful PCs with huge storage capacity to accommodate Win-95. Intel will sell a ton of Pentium processors.

Why will I want Windows-95?

A new Win-95 interface was designed to be easier to use for both less skilled and experienced users who want greater efficiency and flexibility. It performs multi-tasking smoothly, prints faster and supports video playback. To switch from one program to another, you simply click on a taskbar button at the bottom of the screen. More memory is available for MS-DOS applications. No longer are you limited to file name with 8

characters. Telephone support is free for 90 days, then fee based "900" number support kicks in.

Win-95 includes Microsoft Exchange which retrieves mail from many kinds of services including the Internet and other online services. It also can send and receive faxes and other remote messages. An advanced "add on" e-mail system will be available later. A new help system will make Windows-95 easier to learn and operate.

Instead of mastering different kinds of tools (Program Manager, File Manager, Print Manager and Control Panel), users of Windows-95 will be able to browse for and access all resources with a single "Microsoft Explorer" tool. Win-95 supports the industry-standard "Plug and Play" specifications to enable automatic installation and self-configuration of add-on devices.

Win-95 has been subjected to hundreds of thousands of hours of "debugging," the most thoroughly tested product in history. Some 400,000 testers have been wringing out "beta" copies since last fall.

When will Win-95 be available? And how much?

Windows-95 is scheduled to ship on August 24th. Originally to be released a year ago, Bill Gates, wanted to get it right. MS-DOS, Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups 3.11 will still be available by special order.

The suggested list price of Win-95 is \$209 (\$109 for Windows 3.1 users who upgrade.) The street price will be less. Windows-95 shipments could hit 50 million the first year. Microsoft says the product will be "bug" free and released on time ...that is unless the Government steps in. And well they could.

Can I connect to the Internet?

Yes. Win-95 includes a fast, robust 32-bit TCP/IP protocol as well as PPP or "dial in" support. It includes a number of tools such as a Mosaic "browser," Win-WAIS, WinGopher, telnet, FTP, e-mail ...and more.

What is the Microsoft Network (MSN)?

The Microsoft Network is a new on-line shopping and information service that can be accessed through a local phone call by clicking a Win-95 icon. MSN will offer access to electronic mail, bulletin boards, chat rooms, libraries, Internet newsgroups ...you name it. The subscription price (while not announced yet) will be very low. Microsoft will charge a commission on goods sold ...or an access fee to content suppliers.

The Dept. of Justice is looking into charges that by adding MSN to its monopoly Win-95, that they have an unfair edge over such services as Compuserve, Prodigy and American Online. Win-95 users will sign up for the service by simply clicking a mouse button. Competitors say it is too easy. Microsoft could well be forced to disconnect the link from Win-95 to MSN.

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #9

July 15, 1995

SEX, VIOLENCE & TELECOMMUNICATIONS REFORM

The non-profit Progress & Freedom Foundation is the think-tank that wants to dump the Federal Communications Commission. Their president, Jeffrey Eisenach used to be executive director of a political action committee headed up by Newt Gingrich. Much of their financing (about \$6 million in 1995) comes from telecommunications corporations who stand to gain if the FCC is downsized. Corporate sponsors (such as AT&T) can legally pour more money into a non-profit foundation than into a political action committee.

A good share of the PFF budget went into funding Gingrich's televised college lecture series and his cable television show before he became House Speaker. There is even a question as to whether Gingrich used non-profit money to fund his political activities.

PFF is what is known as a "Futuristic Conservative" brain trust. They have 15 resident scholars whose goal is to get rid of the current system and replace it with new Information Age programs. They believe that by selling off all of the electro-magnetic spectrum, the FCC would no longer be needed. A smaller White House Office would handle "housekeeping" matters.

Representative Jack Fields (R-Tex.) chairman of the powerful House Telecommunications Subcommittee is in basic agreement with PFF research. He too sees a declining need for the FCC. His view is that the public interest is protected through competition that the people will reject if it doesn't serve their needs. Without the heavy hand of government (he calls it "...the FCC impediment") new services can be rolled out.

You can expect the House telecommunications reform bill (H.R.1555) to be even more deregulatory than the recently passed Senate (S.652) version. If Congress gets their way, broadcasters, local and long distance telephone and cable companies will enter each other's business after being kept apart and watched over by the government for six decades. The most controversial part of the bills, however, isn't business oriented. That distinction belongs to the cyper-porn and video violence provisions.

A research team at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA conducted a study on online porn entitled "Marketing Pornography on the Information Superhighway." They found immensely popular sexually explicit pictures, descriptions, short stories and film clips. The majority of the sexual images originate from adult-oriented bulletin boards that charge fees and take credit cards. The five largest had annual revenues exceeding \$1 million. Nearly all consumers of online porn are men. The report says there is even evidence that women are paid to hang out in "chat rooms" and bulletin boards to make it more interesting for men.

Gingrich is taking a softer line on indecency on the Internet and believes the so-called Exxon amendment violates free speech "...a violation of the right of adults to communicate with each other..." Nebraska Senator Jim Exon's Communications Decency Act which the Senate passed in May provides for two years in prison and a \$100,000 fine if a "telecommunications device" knowingly is used to "make any comment, request, suggestion, proposal, image ...which is obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, or indecent."

Exon got the bill passed by compiling a blue book and holding private showings for his colleagues in the Senate cloakroom. The vote was carried live on C-SPAN and few Senators wanted to cast a vote that might be characterized as pro-pornography. It passed 84 to 16. The bill has now been folded into the Senate's larger Telecommunications reform bill of 1995. Cable operators are exempt. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit recently upheld 1992 Cable Act regulations that allows operators to control the content on their public and leased access channels.

The Interactive Services Association, a Washington, D.C. group which represents such online service providers as America Online, Prodigy and CompuServe are concerned about their legal responsibility if a user posts something deemed illegal. Prodigy has recently started a bulletin board (the Pseudo BB) which does not scan for inappropriate content. Anything goes!

Stamping out objectionable material on the Internet is technically difficult since the net is not supervised by anyone. And much of its content originates from outside the United States. Anyone can be a publisher on the Internet. Foreign countries are not interested in having America screen their material. There are even those who believe sex on the Internet can even be good for young people since it offers the possibility for genuine, unembarrassed conversation.

Gingrich believes Congress should encourage the online industry to develop tools to help adults control what they and their children see in cyberspace. The House version may exclude pornography censorship altogether. The House doesn't think online censorship will pass constitutional muster since indecent material is protected by the First Amendment. Distributing obscene material across state lines is already illegal under federal law.

There is even a question as to the legality of treating the airwaves and wireline services different from print and recording media. The difference is based on the mandate that the FCC must regulate in the public interest. The print/recording industry has no such watchdog. The FCC not only regulates what may be transmitted ...but when. As a general rule, however, the courts, have disagreed with their handling.

W5YI REPORT

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

Page #10

July 15, 1995

An alternative bill featuring high-tech solutions has just been introduced into Congress. Senator Pat Leahy of Vermont has proposed "The Child Protection, User Empowerment, and Free Expression in Interactive Media Bill" (S.714) which directs the government to study hardware and software means by which users can control the information they receive from the Internet and other online services.

Another suggested solution, called KidCode, is based on web-site voluntary ratings. Software looks for and locks out the X-rated stuff. Microsoft Corp., Netscape Communications Corp and other "browser" developers said they plan to add filtering capabilities.

Although Americans claim to be upset about objectionable material, Fields is already on record as opposing another Senate approved provision: the "V-chip," ...automatic television violence and pornography blocking technology. TV shows found to be "objectionable" under a mandatory ratings system would be blocked.

There is even talk of a Television Ratings Commission consisting of five presidentially appointed commissioners who would act as censors. Fields believes there are alternatives to government content regulation. His credo, "Let the marketplace decide." The Electronic Industries Association is also in the process of developing a "Choice Chip" for those families that want them.

The House telecommunications bill (H.R.1555) is expected to hit the floor this month! It will be interesting how Congress reacts to the censorship issue. Few elected officials want to go on record that the "Contract with America" should support for sex and violence.

ARRL PRESIDENT GEORGE WILSON, W4OYI, CITING EFFECTS OF STROKE RESIGNS OFFICE

On July 1, 1995, American Radio Relay League President George S. Wilson III, W4OYI, submitted his resignation from the office he has held since January 1992. Mr. Wilson, who suffered a stroke on February 11, presently is in a rehabilitation hospital in Evansville, Indiana.

In submitting his resignation as ARRL President, Mr. Wilson said that while he has made progress in rehabilitation, his medical condition prevents him from travelling and from devoting the energy required to perform the duties of the office for the remainder of his term, which expires at the January 1996 meeting of the ARRL Board of Directors. He expressed his appreciation to the members of the Board for the opportunity to serve. "The League has my undying love and support," he said.

In accordance with the ARRL By-Laws, First Vice President Rodney J. Stafford, KB6ZV, has been performing the duties of president since Mr. Wilson became incapacitated in February. With Mr. Wilson's resignation, Mr. Stafford becomes President for the remainder of the term. The next ARRL Vice President in the order of succession, Jay A. Holladay, W6EJJ, becomes First Vice President.

Upon completion of the rehabilitation program in Evansville, Mr. Wilson will be returning to his home in Owensboro, Kentucky.

Meet New ARRL President Rod Stafford, KB6ZV

Rodney J. Stafford, KB6ZV, of San Jose, California, became the 12th president of the American Radio Relay League on July 1, 1995, upon the resignation of George Wilson, W4OYI. He will complete the term of office that expires in January 1996.

Rod Stafford, 52, has been First Vice President of the ARRL since January 1992, and succeeded to the presidency from that position in accordance with the By-Laws. He performed the duties of president from February 11, 1995, when Mr. Wilson was incapacitated by a stroke.

Previously Rod served as a vice president from 1990 to 1992, as Pacific Division Director from 1986 to 1990, and as Section Manager of Santa Clara Valley from 1983 to 1986. Rod is a Life Member of the League; his wife Patricia is N6KLI.

He was appointed Municipal Court Judge in Santa Clara County by the Governor of California in 1990, and this year is serving as Presiding Judge. He is a graduate of the California State University at San Diego and the Santa Clara University School of Law, and was in private law practice from 1972 until 1988. He served as a Commissioner from 1988 to 1990. Rod counts photography among his interests in addition to Amateur Radio.

Rod says: "Serving as George Wilson's First Vice President was a great apprenticeship. George believes in team-building: getting people involved and keeping them informed. That the ARRL was able to keep functioning so seamlessly while George was incapacitated is a testimony to his own management style."

Succeeding Rod Stafford as First Vice President of the ARRL is Jay A. Holladay, W6EJJ, of Los Angeles, California. Jay became Vice Director of the Southwestern Division in 1975, advanced to Director in 1978, and served in that capacity until being elevated to Vice President by the Board in 1984. He served as First Vice President from 1986 to 1990.

(ARRL Press Release, July 5, 1995, from Steve Mansfield, N1MZA, Legislative and Public Affairs Manager)